



Life Skill Development Through a Mystery Bank Robbery

By: Kasey Bozeman

Intended Audience:

High School Youth

Lesson Objectives:

Participants will:

- Practice critical thinking
- Develop communication skills with their peers
- Organize information to make decisions
- Assess their team's ability to solve the mystery
- Apply their experiences to real-world situations

Time: 1 Hour

Equipment & Supplies:

- 8 Ammo Boxes
- White & Colored Cardstock
- Laminating Film
- Velcro
- Box Labels
- Gallon Zippered Bags
- Multi-colored Pom-Poms
- White Address Labels
- Locks:
 - 2 directional
 - 2 alphabet
 - 3 three digit
 - 1 four digit
- Note Paper & Pencils

Files Needed:

- Box Labels
- Lock Box Clue Cards
- Employee Records
- Clue Cards
- Airline Ticket
- Labels for Envelopes
- Stamps
- Police Report
- Scrabble Tiles
- Diary Excerpt

BACKGROUND

4-H youth development programming focuses on participants developing life skills that can enable them to be productive citizens. Skills such as teamwork, communication, cooperation, critical-thinking, decision-making, and record keeping are all valuable. Through this exercise, youth will work in teams to decipher clues about a mystery.

ACTIVITY PREPARATION

The initial preparation of this activity can easily take a few hours. However, once all the materials are prepared and laminated, they can be used time and time again without much work.

Lock Boxes:

Print box labels on white cardstock. Laminate and cut.

Using Velcro, attach box label to top of each of the 8 ammo boxes.

Locks for each Lock Box:

Set combination for each of the locks for the mystery boxes. Use directions that are included with the lock. It is recommended that each lock is a different type/color. If you cannot find different colored locks, use colored duct tape to distinguish locks.

- Box #1: 3 digit combination lock: 258
- Box #2: directional lock: ← - ↓ - → - ↓ - ← - ← - ↑
- Box #3: 4 letter alphabet lock: BANK
- Box #4: 4 letter alphabet lock: BEAD
- Box #5: 3 digit combination lock: 250
- Box #6: directional lock: → - → - ← - ↑ - ↓

Playing card symbols should be placed on this lock. These stickers should be included with the package when you purchase the lock.

Top: Club Right: Heart Bottom: Spade Left: Diamond

- Box #7: 4 digit combination lock: 9174
- Box #8: 3 digit combo lock: 025



Contents for each Lock Box:

Each mystery box will contain the same contents – duplicated six times, one set for each team. Each team's items will be copied on the same color of paper. Laminate all contents.

- Box #1: employee records
- Box #2: envelopes*
- Box #3: music note clue cards
- Box #4: airline ticket
- Box #5: open circle clue cards
- Box #6: police report
- Box #7: scrabble tiles
- Box #8: diary excerpt

Therefore, in Box #1, there will be six copies of the employee records – red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. For the music note and open circle clue cards, they should be cut apart. The scrabble tiles should also be cut apart.

*see instructions below for assembling envelopes

Envelopes:

Each team will need four envelopes prepared. Fold the colored cardstock into an envelope. Print one set of each of the label files – return address labels and Ethan West labels. Print one set of the stamps file.

Each envelope will need to be addressed to Mr. Ethan West. Each envelope will also need a return address label and stamp. It is imperative that the correct return address label and stamp are paired together; this is used to decipher a code to unlock a mystery box.

- First Bank of Greater Atlanta – 9¢ stamp
- Chase Bank – 1¢ stamp
- Three Amigos Credit Union – 7¢ stamp
- Key Bank – 4¢ stamp

Contents for Start Bag:

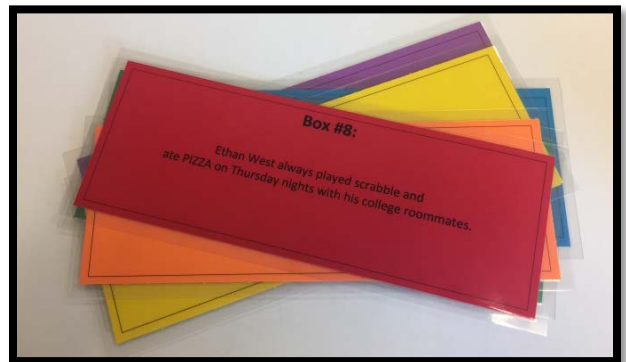
Print, laminate, and cut the lock box clue cards and the star clue cards. Divide by team (color) and place into a gallon plastic bag.

ROOM ARRANGEMENT

It is recommended to use a large room/area where groups have enough space to arrange their contents. You can choose to put all the lock boxes together (example – in the front of the room on a table), or you can distribute them among the room. It is recommended to tell the participants that only one member per team can visit a single lock box at a given time.

LEADING THE ACTIVITY

Once all the materials have been prepared, it is time to begin! Use the colored pom-poms to divide youth into groups. They can choose a pom-pom from a bag; the color of the pom-pom will be their team color.



Instructions:

The Bank of Atlanta has been robbed and the groups must work together to determine 1) who robbed the bank and 2) how this person/people robbed the bank. Groups can use the paper and pencils to take notes. Each group will be given an initial set of clues along with clues to help them open lock boxes. There are 8 lock boxes that contain additional clues and information. You can open the lock boxes in any order, but there may be information inside some boxes that can help you open other boxes. Once you think you know who robbed the bank and how he/she robbed the bank, write your guess on a sheet of paper and submit to the facilitator.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

While some groups may quickly solve the mystery, other groups may struggle. As the facilitator, you should walk around during the activity to see how well the youth are doing at solving the mystery. As a way to help the teams that appear to be struggling, here are some guiding questions:

- When did the robbery occur?
- How was the bank door opened?
- Who had access to the opening the bank door that way?
- How was the vault opened?
- Who had access to opening the vault that way?
- What is the location of each person during the time of the robbery?

SOLUTION

While there can be lots of speculation, there is really only one solution to the mystery.

Person	Role/Relationships	Thursday Night Location
Clara Roberts	Administrative Assistant Brother – Howard	Robbed the bank.
Howard Roberts	Construction Company Sister – Clara	Helped rob the bank.
Stanley West	Bank President Half-Brother – Ethan	Flying to Mexico; confirmed by airline.
Mason Smith	Bank Client	Eating pizza and playing scrabble with college roommates. Howard reported he was running from the bank (not true).
Indigo Flowers	Hippie Sister – Misty Leigh	Had dinner and spent the night with his parents.
Misty Leigh White	Boutique Owner Brother – Indigo	Had dinner and spent the night with her parents.
Stephen Callaway	Bank Janitor	At the hospital because his sister was giving birth. (doesn't explicitly state this information)
Ethan West	Half-Brother – Stanley	Eating pizza and playing scrabble with college roommates, including Mason Smith.

The robbery occurred after the bank closed on Thursday and before the bank opened on Friday. Only two people have keys to the front door – Stanley West and Stephen Callaway. Stanley West would allow Clara to borrow his key from time to time. The front door was opened by a key, and the vault was blasted open by dynamite.

Stanley West was at the Atlanta airport on Thursday afternoon. His original flight was scheduled to depart at 5:15PM; therefore, he arrived at the airport before 5:00PM (when the bank closed). His flight was delayed, but he did travel to Mexico City. Authorities apprehended him only because of suspicion.

Indigo Flowers and Misty Leigh White were having dinner with their parents on Thursday night. Their parents could confirm their location. The story Howard told police about seeing Indigo near the bank on Thursday night was false.

Mason Smith and Ethan West were eating pizza and playing scrabble. Their other college roommates could confirm their location.

The front door opened with a key; Clara borrowed from Stanley West. The vault blasted open with dynamite supplied by Howard Roberts. Clara was the first person to arrive at the bank on Friday morning, and she reported the robbery to the police. While it is not explicitly stated, Stephen Callaway would have been at the hospital on Thursday night with his sister, who was giving birth. Stephen's family could confirm his location. It is unclear if Howard helped Clara rob the bank or not, but he did supply the dynamite.

DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

While the intent is for the activity to build communication, cooperation, and teamwork skills among youth participants, it is important for the facilitator to lead a debrief discussion at the end of the lesson. Potential debrief questions could include:

- What are your thoughts about this activity?
- Define a challenging moment while solving the mystery. What made it challenging?
- Define a powerful moment while solving the mystery. What made it powerful?
- What were some skills you developed/exercised as a team during this process?
- How well did you and your team communicate?
- What would you do differently if you were to approach the same challenge again?
- How will you apply what you learned in the future?

REFERENCES

Jordan, J. (2014). The All American Team Lesson Plan, State 4-H Council.

Pappas, P. (2010). The Murder Mystery – an exercise in effective group discussion and problem solving.

Life Skill Development Through a Mystery Bank Robbery

Supplemental Materials

Lock Box Labels

Box #1

Box #2

Box #3

Box #4

Box #5

Box #6

Box #7

Box #8

Life Skill Development Through a Mystery Bank Robbery

Supplemental Materials

Lock Box Preparation

Lock Box Preparation

Box #1 Silver Combo Lock 258	Employee Records
Box #2 Black Directional Lock ← - ↓ - → - ↓ - ← - ← - ↑	Envelopes
Box #3 Blue Alphabet Lock BANK	Music Note Clue Cards
Box #4 Pink Alphabet Lock BEAD	Airline Ticket
Box #5 Hunter Green Combo Lock 250	Open Circle Clue Cards
Box #6 Blue Directional Lock → - → - ← - ↑ - ↓	Police Report
Box #7 Blue Combo Lock 9174	Scrabble Tiles
Box #8 Red Combo Lock 025	Clara Diary Excerpt

Lock Answers

Lock #1: 258

$$43 \times 6 = 258$$

Lock #2: ← - ↓ - → - ↓ - ← - ← - ↑

West-South-East-South-West-West-North

Lock #3: Bank

Amanda Armstrong works at the bank.

Lock #4: Bead

Indigo sold bead to Misty Leigh.

Lock #5: 250

$$500/2 = 250$$

Lock #6: → - → - ← - ↑ - ↓

Heart-Heart-Diamond-Club-Spade

Lock #7: 9174

Order the envelopes using the first, second, third, and fourth listed in the return address.

Use stamp demonization to determine code.

Lock #8: 025

Use the scrabble tiles:

$$P (3) + I (1) + Z (10) + Z (10) + A (1) = 25$$



The Bank of Atlanta Employee Records

Updated June 1, 2017

Employee Name	Hire Date	Code to Vault	Key to Bank
Amanda Armstrong	June 1, 2017	346	No
Bethany Brown	December 1, 1999	215	No
Stephen Callaway	November 15, 2011	783	Yes
Monica Chase	March 15, 2015	423	No
Rieko Holloway	January 15, 2012	793	No
Kurt McMillan	October 15, 2007	521	No
Destiny Owens	July 1, 2013	437	No
Peter Prospect	August 15, 2012	543	No
Amanda Richards	October 1, 2014	871	No
Clara Roberts	June 1, 2000	478	No
Clinton Smith	September 1, 2013	213	No
Roberta Smith	August 15, 2015	545	No
Emily Thompson	July 1, 2015	765	No
Stanley West	June 1, 1996	879	Yes

Mr. Ethan West
265 Peachtree St NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. Ethan West
265 Peachtree St NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. Ethan West
265 Peachtree St NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. Ethan West
265 Peachtree St NE
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265 Peachtree St NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. Ethan West
265 Peachtree St NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. Ethan West
265 Peachtree St NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

First Bank of Greater Atlanta
100 Lewis Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30303

First Bank of Greater Atlanta
100 Lewis Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30303

First Bank of Greater Atlanta
100 Lewis Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30303

First Bank of Greater Atlanta
100 Lewis Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30303

First Bank of Greater Atlanta
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First Bank of Greater Atlanta
100 Lewis Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30303



Chase Bank
5000 Second Street
Atlanta, GA 30303



Chase Bank
5000 Second Street
Atlanta, GA 30303



Chase Bank
5000 Second Street
Atlanta, GA 30303



Chase Bank
5000 Second Street
Atlanta, GA 30303



Chase Bank
5000 Second Street
Atlanta, GA 30303



Chase Bank
5000 Second Street
Atlanta, GA 30303

Three Amigos Credit Union
3276 West Peachtree Street
Atlanta, GA 30303

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3276 West Peachtree Street
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Three Amigos Credit Union
3276 West Peachtree Street
Atlanta, GA 30303



Key Bank
Post Office Box 004
Atlanta, GA 30303



Key Bank
Post Office Box 004
Atlanta, GA 30303



Key Bank
Post Office Box 004
Atlanta, GA 30303



Key Bank
Post Office Box 004
Atlanta, GA 30303



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Mr. West claims that his half-brother, Ethan West, had always been jealous of him.



Mr. Smith made weekly deposits at The Bank of Atlanta on Thursday afternoons. He usually spoke to Clara before seeing a teller to make the deposit.



Mr. Smith was found by the Atlanta Police on July 12. He had arrived at the Atlanta Airport at 10:00AM to fly to Los Angeles.



Misty Leigh said that Indigo had spent the night of July 11 at the home of their parents. Indigo left the house after a pleasant breakfast on the morning of July 12.



**No airplanes depart the
Atlanta Airport between
9:00PM and 5:00AM.**



**Mr. Smith's father,
a business investor in California,
had died in September.**



**Indigo Flowers was carrying
\$500 when the police
apprehended him. He had
thrown a package into the
river as the police approached.**



**A Calico Construction Company
employee, Howard Roberts, said
that a hippie had been hanging
around the construction
company on July 10.**



**A substantial amount of
dynamite had been stolen from
the Calico Construction Company
on July 10.**



FLIGHT
DELTA AIRLINES DL31

PASSENGER

West, Stanley

GATE

A22

DEPARTURE

5:15 PM 11 JULY 2017

BOARDING ZONE

D3

TRACKING

2 207 365 3958 3309 0

DATA

00 I78 D

OPTIONS

1ST CL



FLIGHT
DELTA AIRLINES DL31

PASSENGER

SEAT

24C

DEPARTURE

5:15

OPTIONS

1ST CL



**The president of the bank,
Mr. West, did not
show up for work on
July 12.**



**Mason and Ethan
attended the University of
Georgia together and
were roommates.**



**The janitor of the bank,
Stephen Callaway, became
an uncle on July 11. His
sister gave birth to his niece,
Julia on Thursday afternoon.**



**The president of the bank
had been having trouble
with his partner, who spent
nearly all of the bank's profits.
He had frequently spoken of
leaving his position.**



Miss Roberts stated that her brother Howard, when strolling to a Starbuck's about 11:00PM on Thursday, had seen Mr. Smith running from The Atlanta Bank.



Indigo Flowers lived 1 block from The Bank of Atlanta.



Indigo Flowers was described as a hippie. He recently dropped out of college and usually spent his days hanging out in the park, near the riverfront.



The airline clerk confirmed the time of Mr. Smith's arrival to the airport.



Mr. Callaway had a rare coin collection that he talked about often at work.



Ethan West was in Chicago on Monday, July 8 and bought an expensive car.



Ethan wanted to marry Clara.



In addition to keeping payroll records, Mr. Roberts was responsible for the dynamite supplies of the Calico Construction Company.



City of Atlanta Police Report



Date:	Friday, July 12
Time:	8:00AM
Location:	The Bank of Atlanta 500 Peachtree Street Atlanta, GA 30305
Witnesses:	Clara Roberts reported to police.
Details:	Clara arrived at The Bank of Atlanta at approximately 8:00AM on July 12. She discovered the front door of the bank was already unlocked by someone using a key. She then discovered the vault had been blasted open and an undisclosed amount of cash was missing. She immediately reported the crime to the Atlanta Police Department. Police arrived on the scene at approximately 8:30AM. Clara tried to call the Bank President, but she could not reach him. The bank was scheduled to open at 9:00AM Friday morning.
Reporting Officer:	Dudley Mathers

A₁

B₃

C₃

D₂

E₁

F₄

G₂

H₄

I₁

J₈

K₅

L₁

M₃

N₁

O₁

P₃

Q₁₀

R₁

S₁

T₁

U₁

V₄

W₄

X₈

Y₄

Z₁₀

&

Dear Diary,
Every week, I just know that Mason
flirts with me! He is always
smiling and laughing; sometimes
he brings me flowers. He is such a
handsome man; I hope he asks for
my hand in marriage. He's
especially rich. In fact, he has the
largest bank account of any
patron in the bank. I get to see
those records in Mr. West's office.
With that large inheritance from
Mason's dad's death, maybe I
won't have to work at this dumb ol'
job anymore.

A girl can dream...

Clara

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Supplemental Materials

Start Bag Materials

Box #1:

Multiply

the number of hours The Bank of Atlanta is open in a week
by
the number of letters in the name of the country where Mr. West was arrested

Box #2:

Mr. West was excited about his trip south of the border to Mexico. He was planning on spending plenty of time in the eastern region as well as traveling to some resorts in the southwestern part of the country. Mr. West was planning on this vacation to be a relaxing experience, before he had to travel north to go back home.

Box #3:

Four letter word for the place of
employment for Amanda Armstrong.

Box #4:

What did Indigo sell to Misty Leigh?

Box #5:

Divide
the number of dollars Misty Leigh spent on Native American beads
By
the number hours Mr. West's flight was delayed

Box #6:

Clara had a magnet on her desk that read
"Marriage is like a deck of cards. In the beginning, all you need is two hearts
and a diamond. By the end, you wish you had a club and a spade."

Box #7:

Ethan West had been receiving letters from other banks in the Atlanta area, trying to solicit his business.

Box #8:

Ethan West always played scrabble and ate PIZZA on Thursday nights with his college roommates.

The Bank of Atlanta is open

**Monday - Friday
9:00AM - 5:00PM**

**Saturday
9:00AM - 12:00PM**



**Authorities at the Mexico
City International Airport
arrested Stanley West
at 12:00PM on Friday,
July 12.**



**Clara Roberts, the
Administrative Assistant
for Mr. West, would borrow
his key to come into the
office early to do her work.**



**Misty Leigh White told
police she bought \$500 worth
of genuine Native American
beads from her brother for
resale in her boutique
downtown.**



**A strange, hippie-type person
had been sitting outside of the
bank on Thursday, July 11,
watching employees and
customers.**



**Mr. West's flight was
delayed for 2 hours.**



**Mason Smith had been
banking with The Bank of
Atlanta his entire life. He had
more than \$500,000 in his
savings account at the
time of the robbery.**

